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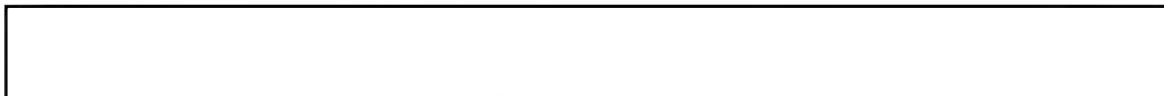
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ARAB STATES - FEDAYEEN: Arab reaction to the events in Khartoum ranges from attempts to justify the terrorists' actions to Jordan's outright condemnation.

The Sudanese have not made clear how they intend to deal with the terrorists. An official statement yesterday cryptically stated that Khartoum would weigh its "international obligations" before deciding on the disposition of the Black September team. The declaration reaffirmed that Sudan still supports the Palestinian cause despite the incident. The ambivalence of the Sudanese reflects awareness that they are confronted with an explosive issue in the Arab world. The Sudanese, however, in deciding their next moves will no doubt be sensitive to pressure from abroad for dealing firmly with the terrorists.

In Egypt, Foreign Ministry officials expressed condolences to the US mission but gave no sign that Egypt would publicly condemn the execution of the diplomats. The Egyptian press condoned the fedayeen's terrorist tactics as a manifestation of the despair of a people "who have lost everything." Cairo's daily, Al Akhbar, charged the US with partial responsibility for the incident because of its support for Israel and failure "to tackle the problem at its roots." Thus far there has been no official or editorial commentary from Libya.

Other Arab states have privately expressed sympathy but, as in Egypt, refrained from publicly denouncing Black September. Lebanon's Prime Minister Salam expressed regrets, but called upon the international community to find a solution to the Middle East problem because it "prompts" certain Palestinians to resort to terrorism.



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Jordan is the only Arab government thus far that has categorically denounced the terrorists. The announcement in Amman yesterday of King Husayn's approval of death sentences against senior Black September official Muhammad Awadh and "several" other fedayeen will no doubt prompt Black September to redouble its efforts against Jordanian personalities.

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FRANCE: Almost complete results of first round voting in the legislative elections Sunday show the governing coalition leading in seats won, but behind in total votes.

In a heavy turnout of over 80 percent of registered voters, the Socialist-Communist alliance was reported ahead by 6 percent of the total vote. Out of the 469--of 490--districts in which results were available, however, the Pompidou coalition had won 46 seats to the left's nine. It is more difficult to win in the first round in which an absolute majority is required; in the second, only a plurality is needed.

The governing coalition went into the voting 8 to 11 percentage points behind the left, according to polls published late last week.

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The final results of the election will emerge after the second round on 11 March. This week will be filled with frantic bargaining in which parties will agree to withdraw certain candidates in return for backing of their representatives in other districts. The governing coalition will be looking to

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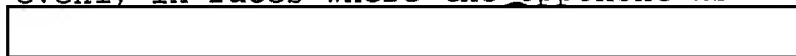
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the centrists in this regard, particularly the Le-canuet faction. The failure of the Socialists to achieve the one to 4 percentage point lead over the Communists predicted by the latest polls may complicate such bargaining within the left and work to the government's advantage. Communist leaders, concerned that the Socialists could emerge from the election as the dominant leftist party, may now be even more reluctant to withdraw in favor of Socialists. Polls of the crucial uncommitted third of the population have indicated, moreover, that these voters will swing overwhelmingly in favor of governing coalition candidates opposing Communists next Sunday. They would split evenly in races where the opponent is a Socialist.



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USSR - WEST GERMANY: Soviet party leader Brezhnev has accepted Chancellor Brandt's long-standing invitation to visit West Germany, a move anticipated since Brandt's re-election last November. A Bonn spokesman told the US Friday that it had been agreed that the trip will take place before the summer vacation period, but no specific date has been set. Also to be worked out are the degree of formality and the duration of the visit, and whether Brezhnev will meet with Brandt in Bonn or somewhere else. Despite occasional frictions, Soviet - West German relations remain generally good. Brezhnev has a major stake in the success of Brandt's Ostpolitik, and during the electoral campaign last fall Moscow came through with a number of accommodations to demonstrate its positive response to Brandt's foreign policy. [REDACTED]

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LAOS: The fighting has almost died out. Only scattered shellings and clashes were reported in the past two days on the Bolovens Plateau and in the central panhandle. Small North Vietnamese units skirmished with Vang Pao's irregulars south of Xieng Khouangville on 2 March, but field commanders reported no violations around the Plaine des Jarres or in the remote northwest over the weekend. The joint commissions charged with supervising implementation of the peace agreement met for the second time on 2 March. Within the military commission, inconclusive debate continued over procedural matters. The political commission discussed the composition of the Joint National Political Council but made only limited progress. This dallying is likely to continue until chief Communist negotiator Phoumi Vongvichit returns from consultations in Hanoi and Sam Neua. [REDACTED]

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